

FY 2021-22 Budget Board of Supervisor Inquiry Form

Deadline: October 31, 2021

Please email: CAO-Budget@sonoma-county.org

Board Member	
Gorin	
Rabbitt	
Coursey	X
Gore	
Hopkins	

Department: General Services

Date: 9/1/2021

Inquiry Number: BIR-10

Request/Question:

What needs to happen to reinstate the intern program at Fleet Operations?

Response:

Background: During the summer of 2009, Sonoma Water, the County's Human Services Department, and more than 20 other County agencies, community based organizations, and non-profits collaborated to establish the Sonoma County Youth Ecology Corps (SCYEC) summer work experience and educational program where young adults (aged 16-24) are paid for eight weeks of ecosystem restoration and conservation-related projects while also obtaining relevant skills to prepare them for the labor market. In an effort to expand upon the exceptional skill building and workforce development for the County's youth, the SCYEC program was expanded by partnering with the Bay Area nonprofit Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB) to create a 'pathway' to employment with the Career Pathways Program (CPP) where SCYEC work crews are able to advance to a yearlong paid internship with Sonoma Water and other local agencies, landowners, business owners, and community organizations.

During 2017, Sonoma Water, Humans Services Department, SCYEC, and a few other partners reached out to General Services, Regional Parks, and other County departments to solicit interest in hosting an intern at no cost to the County (CCNB remains the employer of record). Seeing the immense potential of SCYEC's CPP and helping our disadvantaged youth to develop relevant skills for the modern workforce, General Services joined in CPP career fairs and eventually hosting our first intern at Fleet Operations' Heavy Equipment Facility starting January 2017. For the next several years (until December 2019), Fleet Operations Division successfully hosted a total of four interns, of which, all went on to successfully obtain entry level positions with local businesses. General Service's ability to host future interns was abruptly interrupted during Nov/Dec '19 following a 'cease and desist' notification from Local 39 expressing concerns that bargaining unit work was somehow being performed by "outside people".

Ever since the County received Local 39's cease and desist letter (as pertaining to the continued hosting

of interns at General Services' Fleet Operations Division), the County has continued to engage in several discussions with Local 39 in an effort to inform all stakeholders of the scope of the internship program and to reassure Local 39 representatives that no bargaining unit work is being performed by outside people. During the past 18 months, the County has made numerous attempts to provide additional information to Local 39 explaining the overwhelmingly positive impact this program has, and continues to have, for our community's disadvantaged youth and the local economy and that such efforts actually support Local 39 membership by investing in unskilled labor to create semi-skilled labor that can become union members by filling one of several existing entry level Heavy Equipment Mechanic (or Automotive Mechanic) vacancies.

Current/Future Actions: During July 2021, General Services, Human Services' Labor Relations, and Local 39 engaged in a final meeting to hopefully address Local 39's unsubstantiated claim that bargaining unit work was being performed by outside people. With Local 39 holding firm to their position and demanding that the County respect the cease and desist, Human Resource Department's Labor Relations has recommended that the General Services continue to pause efforts to host future CPP / CCNB interns and to address this topic during upcoming labor negotiations. With virtually all options at the department level exhausted, General Services has accepted this recommendation to pause support to the CPP / CCNB work experience program and to seek resolution through future labor negotiations.